THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (c) The primary health care services are being provided in rural areas through a network of 145272 Sub-centres, 22370 Primary Health Centres and 4045 Community Health Centres as on March 2007. Under National Rural Health Mission, funds are released by the Central Government to all State/ UT Governments for upgradation/strengthening/establishment of their SCs, PHCs and CHCs. The States/UTs Governments are however required to incorporate their requirement in their annual NRHM Programme Implementation Plans (PIP).

Plan to address the menace of deafness

3461. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the average number of children born deaf every year and the percentage of population in the country suffering from progressive and acute hearing loss;

(b) whether Government has any plan to address the menace of deafness;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether it is also proposed to start ENT Departments in every district hospital in the country and to provide adequate care to the hearing impaired?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) NSSO 58th round (2002) reveals that the Prevalence rates of hearing impaired among the children below 4 years was 55 both in rural and urban areas.

It has identified hearing impairment in terms of profound, severe and moderate cases. The data depicts that among the hearing impaired persons 31.1% cases had profound, while 39.8% cases had severe and the rest 29% cases had moderate hearing impairment in the rural areas. In the case of urban areas 34.5% had profound, 36.2% had severe while the rest 29.3% have moderate hearing impairment.

(b) and (c) To address this huge burden of Hearing impairment, the pilot phase of National Programme and Prevention and Control of Deafness (NPPCD) has been launced in 25 districts of 10 States and one U.T. in 2007.

This programme is being extended to 203 districts during the Eleventh Five Year Plan (2008—2012).

(d) Under the programme (NPPCD), Capacity Building of the entire identified District hospitals will be undertaken in the programme by providing ENT and Audiology Equipments along with One Audiometric Assistant and One Special Educator (Instructor for the Young Hearing Impaired) to the district Hospital to provide adequate care to the hearing impaired.

Under Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS) it is mandatory to have atleast One ENT surgeon in each district hospital.